

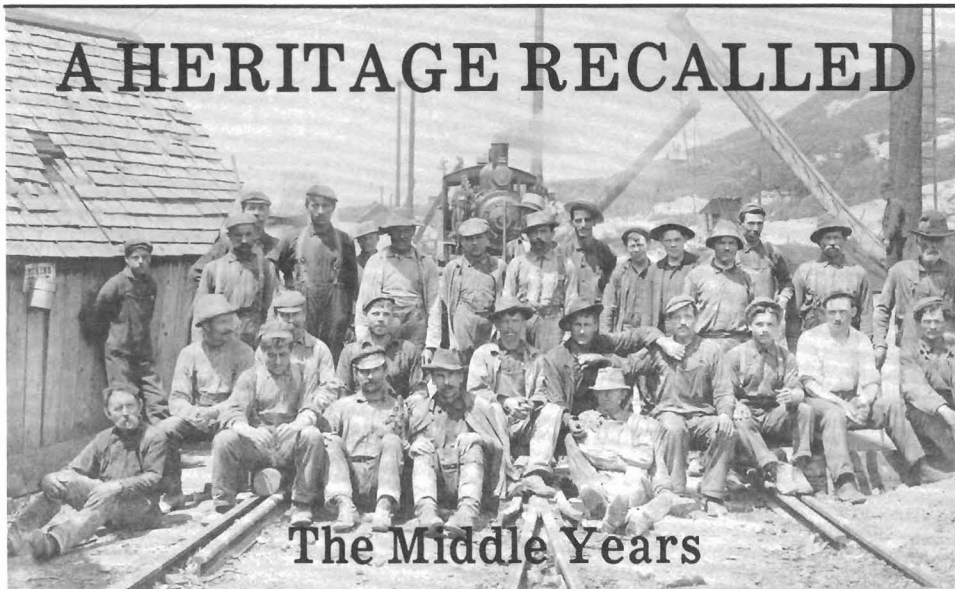
RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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A HERITAGE RECALLED



The Middle Years

THE IRISH IN RUTLAND IN 1880*

By Hugh Short

The year of 1880 was an active one for the Irish in Rutland, Vermont, as in the rest of the nation. Besides the perennial St. Patrick's Day celebration the new year began with a production by Howarth's Irish Character and Comedy Company before a large audience and closed with the formation of a branch of the National Land League on December 29, and J. D. Hanrahan, M.D. is the hero (or the villain) of the story of this Irish community.

Emigration was heaviest in the years following the Great Famine. By 1880 a generation of American-born Irish resided in the area; but many Irish-born still lived in Rutland, with some continuing immigration (Naturalization records show county origins; Roscommon was first, followed by Sligo and Mayo). For example, there were 19 marriages in which at least one of the partners was born in Ireland and 111 Rutland births out of 343 with at least one Irish-born parent. On the negative side, 19 died who had come from the old country. As reported in the **Rutland Herald and Globe**, on occasion, the Irish left for better opportunities in New Jersey, Boston, North Adams, Troy, Rochester, and Leadville, Colorado. (Two, O'Neil and Patten, are later in the year reported killed there.) Most, however, seemed to have settled into life in the Town of Rutland, residing in the village of East Rutland, Center Rutland, Sutherland Falls (now Proctor) and, specially, in West Rutland. The majority, particularly outside of the village, worked in the marble quarries.

One of the reasons for an excited year was the famine in Ireland, induced by the potato crop failure in 1879, with the consequent suffering in the winter and spring of 1880. This precipitated a visit to the United States by Charles Stewart Parnell,

**This article was prepared as an address to the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Rutland. Mr. Short is a resident of Chittenden.*

In Volume XII No. 3 and Volume XIII No. 1 of the Rutland Historical Society Quarterly, the editors published the first two installments of a series of accounts of the ethnic heritage of Rutland.

The series began with an introductory overview of Rutland's diverse immigrants and then began chronologically with the arrival of the Irish and the French Canadians, the first of many immigrant groups who came to Rutland after the time of its settlement. The series continued with accounts of the Poles and Swedes.

The article on "The Irish in Rutland in 1880" would have appeared in an earlier issue but came to the attention of the editors after the series was started. Accounts relating to the Swedes will conclude in this issue, and articles relating to the Italians, Finns and smaller populations from Central Europe will continue in this and future Quarterlies. Copies of the first two issues in this series are available from the Society at \$3.00 a copy.

Irish Parliamentary leader, and John Dillon of the Land League. Ostensibly, they were raising funds for famine relief but were, by their lectures, presenting the case of the political and economic injustice inflicted on their country by the British government. Their trip is reported extensively in the *Herald*. On several occasions lengthy editorials expound the paper's editorial position on the Irish Question. On January 6, Parnell is labelled a "Fenian", and the editorial suggests, "... the best thing England can do for Ireland is to help the distressed peasantry to emigrate ..." A month later a column on the editorial page is devoted to a sketch of the "Irish agitator's" life. But while the *Herald* is hostile to Parnell, it also deplores the tenant system that has impoverished the Irish.

Almost daily the paper reports the fund-raising for Irish relief throughout the United States and Canada. On February 21 it reports in "Local Notes" that such a collection will be taken up in Rutland's Catholic schools the following day. Many send help personally to friends and relatives in the suffering districts, and Mrs. P. McManus showed initiative in collecting money for the town of Geevah in County Sligo, including a \$50 contribution from Governor Proctor. The income from the St. Patrick's Day affair will likewise be donated for Irish relief; the *Herald* encourages its readers to attend. Throughout the nation parades and dinners were cancelled, with the money instead contributed for relief. On March 20 it was announced that the proceeds of the 17th in Rutland were \$335.85, with more to come. By June 7 Vermont Catholics had raised \$5,345 for the sufferers. (Throughout the Spring the controversies involving the three major relief agencies, the Dutchess of Marlboro's Mansion House Fund, that of James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald* and Parnell's, are covered almost daily.) The Irish in Rutland, it seems, were kept well informed.

Life was not all news of suffering comrades, and, although sports did not have the role they do today, news of such activity sifted down to the Irish community. Living and training in Rutland was John McMahon, the Bakersfield native and wrestling champion. This was the era of collar and elbow wrestling, when Vermonters, especially Irishmen, dominated the world. In a well-publicized match, before 4,000 spectators in Boston against H. M. Dufur, March 16, 1880, no fall occurred, and a draw was declared. Later, in July, he defeats his cousin, James Owens, in a three hour match for the championship belt.

In April, there was an evening of indoor racing in the Town Hall put on by John Shea of Burlington, where Miss Jessie Monahan, a famous pedestrian, covered three miles, taking second place to Irvine, whose winning time was 30 minutes, 15 seconds. Pedestrian races in the nation and London, with walkers like Rowell, O'Leary and Sullivan, were reported, as well as skulling contests between Hanlon, Riley and Ross. The prize-fight victory of Paddy Ryan, from West Troy, over Joe Goss of New York City, was of interest to the Irish, perhaps more than the extensive coverage of the shooting match in Dublin between American and Irish teams. Yet only a moderate crowd turned out for a sparring match between Ryan and Charles McDonald, the champion of Canada, held in the Town Hall.

Local sports received meager coverage. Occasionally, a challenge baseball game would be mentioned with few details. Independence Day, however, was a big day for the Irish. It coincided with their anti-British sentiments, but the noise

and excitement was deplored by the **Herald**. Games were held at the Fairgrounds with money prizes that appealed to the Irish and others of the working class. (The Rutland Athletic Association, dominated by Hugh Baxter, held their amateur contests in September.) Lewis Martelle won the \$5 first prize in the half-mile run, but Patrick Patten was second. Charles Myron won \$3 in the hurdles, and the appropriately named Hop Rice beat out McGillis and O'Neil in the 100 yard sack race in the fast time of 16.5 seconds. James Gillespie won both the hop, skip and jump and standing jump (9 feet, 2½ inches).

Work was still the primary activity of the poor immigrant and his children. The Irish as a group remained laborers for several generations despite some success in small businesses such as grocery stores and an occasional professional man. Some worked for the railroad, as attested by the fund-raising activities of conductors Clifford and Foy for Mr. Ed Kelley, a sick depot worker, as well as the Irish names appearing in the reports of railroad accidents. Timothy Sullivan was offered \$500 a year as school janitor and successfully held out for \$550. Police, who appear to be Irish, were paid \$35 a month. Out of 45 teachers, 13 have Irish names (six out of six in the West Rutland District). Most of the laborers on the Street Department, where work was sparse, received \$1.25 a day (almost all Irish).

The marble quarries were the chief source of employment, and 1,500 worked in the marble industry in 1880. Sometimes the quarries closed in the winter, and, if not, the wage dropped to 80 or 90 cents a day for eight hours. In March of 1880, 200 West Rutland quarrymen went on strike. They were receiving 10 cents an hour for a 10 hour day. They asked for \$1.25, but when they were ordered out of the company houses, the strike collapsed. The wage was later raised to \$1.10, but the **Herald** emphasized that this was done out of the generosity of the company. The men had appeared in the **Herald's** office to present their case. Still, a check of the census records for that year indicates that the women stayed at home to care for the house. (Milk was three cents a quart, and all-wool suits cost \$8.50.)

As a presidential election year, 1880 generated the usual interest. The near and seeming Democratic victory in 1876 frightened the Republicans, and when the Democrats had the temerity to nominate a Union war hero, Winfield S. Hancock, there was an intense effort to win the Irish vote. Traditionally Democratic, the Irish in Rutland were no exception. In the 60s (called Finnegans) and 70s they were under the leadership of John Cain (born on the Isle of Man and died in March of 1880), but had in recent years been directed by John D. Hanrahan, the principal physician of the Irish community. The **Rutland Herald and Globe** was staunchly Republican, even supporting Grant at the 1880 Republican Convention, and there was no attempt at objectivity when it came to partisan politics.

Reports on Republican Irish movements throughout the United States are carefully noted, and full coverage is given to imported Irish speakers. General Burke, Colonel O'Beirne and Judge Morrison from Chicago are the principal speakers visiting the Rutland area. Mass meetings with the featured orators were held in West Rutland and in the Village. Work was halted at the Columbian Marble Plant to hear the talks. Judge Morrison was the chief spokesman for the economic argument. The quarrymen were warned that if the Republican tariffs were removed that they would have to compete with Italian marble workers who received 26 cents a day in contrast to the \$1.10 in Vermont. Other arguments presented were that the Democrats and their Free Trade policy were supporting the English position. Comic, and ironic, relief was provided when one of the visiting Republican orators, Henry O'Connor of Washington, got drunk at a meeting. There are some disturbances at these meetings. And when the **Herald and Globe** blames Dr. Hanrahan, he pens a lengthy letter to the editor defending his innocence and expressing hurt at the personal attack after 12 years of amiable relations with the **Herald's** editor.

Like all communities, Rutland had its share of violence, and, like all working people, the Rutland Irish had their share of direct personal encounters. But, since this was less than 50 short years after the Irish custom of Faction Fighting with sticks at fairs and meetings, it was relatively minor. The most serious, however, involved a blow from behind. On January 14, Owen Gilhooley went out to fasten a shutter and was struck on the skull with a metal object. When, still conscious, he reached for his assailant, he was cut on the hand. For awhile his life hung in

balance. Hubert Downs, a personal enemy, was accused of being the attacker. Gilhooley recovered, and on March 25 Downs was sentenced to a year of hard labor in the House of Correction.

Other reported violence, and, I imagine, the unreported, would be just as extensive, was usually inter-Irish and involved the women as well. An exception was the shaking-up on Merchants Row that Tim Sullivan gave to H. W. Love, for which he had to post a \$100 fine with six months probation. And "one Murphy" knocked a man down on Center Street and was arrested. The victim was not named. In a more unusual vein, John McGowan issued an assault complaint against John McCue. McGowan was fined, and McCue was discharged. Picking on the wrong kids could be expensive too. A brakeman was fined \$2 and \$7 in costs for kicking the son of John McGurk, bruising his thighs.

On the distaff side, Mrs. Bridget Steward and Milly French of Mendon were found guilty of assault in separate cases. It was Milly's second offense, and she was sent to the House of Correction. When Bryan and Ann McDonough had a fight, it was Ann who pleaded guilty and was fined. On a grander scale, John Shannon got in a fight with his wife, and, in consequence, his wife's mother, Mrs. Alice Griffen, hit him with the back of an axe. She was fined \$7 and costs. John was fined for intoxication and jailed until he disclosed that he got his drink from Mike Foley's bottle, Mike being fined \$10. (Do the fines indicate the judges' attitudes towards the various offenses?) In a County Court verdict William Clifford was found guilty of assault and battery against Louis F. Schofield and paid damages of \$33.75. And in a November post-election fight scene, Jim Burnes of Sutherland Falls struck Jim Tree on the nose with a piece of store furniture, causing much blood. Animals got their licks (or kicks) in too when A. W. Higgins was struck lightly in the temple by a playful horse.

The violence of accidents touched the Irish, among others. In January, Mrs. McGavy broke her arm slipping on the ice, Charles McDevitt was bruised by a sled, and Stephen Cannon was thrown by a horse. Perhaps it was the weather, but accident reports abate. In March, Thomas Dolan's little daughter broke her arm in two places. Less accidentally, some children at 17 Elm Street heated a poker, and Thomas McCarty, getting out of bed, stepped on it. April 7, Willie, the son of Patrick Riley, fell at the Green Street Schoolyard and broke his collarbone.

A serious and sad accident was the drowning of 16 year old Stephen Callaghan in Otter Creek. His brother was unable to save him. The two boys and their mother had just come over from Ireland three months before. The aged suffered too, as 88 year old Edward McCormick of West Rutland fell and fractured his thigh. Morris Reynolds, 75 and deaf, was hurt when his farm wagon was hit by a train. In a family accident, Mrs. John Kennedy's two small sons, one of whom was driving, were injured in a two-vehicle collision. One boy's thumb was almost severed, and a vehicle ran over his chest. The other boy suffered internal injuries. The *Herald* showed little sympathy and blamed the boy for not turning out.

But the saddest accident of all was the burning to death of Mrs. Patrick McCormick, 30, of West Rutland, who was lighting a fire with kerosene. Her oldest child was 10 and her youngest four months. The year closes with similar sadness, for the eight year old child of Timothy Sweeny of Elm Street, injured while coasting the last week of December, died of inflammation of the bowels.

The work of the Irish was dangerous in the quarries and on the railroads. However, 1880 does not seem to be too accident-filled. In fact, Patrick Brislin, in a narrow escape in Pittsford, only lost the sole of his boot. Ed Meehan, a freight brakeman, was not so lucky. He slipped and will probably lose two toes. Patrick Hulihan, of Center Rutland, a man in his 60s and a night watchman on the Delaware and Hudson, was struck in the hips by timers of the engine and cut his forehead. He was treated by Dr. Hanrahan. At Sutherland Falls, freight conductor Foy was bruised and shaken up when he fell from a car.

In the marble industry a workman in P. H. Dolan's works in Center Rutland had his wrist badly wounded from the scraper of a moulding machine, and John Dolan, in the employ of Sheldon and Sloson, West Rutland, slipped and cut his arm and hand on a saw. John Murphy, apparently injured on the highway, sued the Town of Rutland. In two bad days in September at the Columbian Mills, Daniel Callahan had his leg badly scraped by a falling block of marble, and Timothy

Murphy, in the same bed, lost the great toe of his right foot and had the other foot jammed.

Those who moved away met with violence as well. Frank McCormick (an unlucky name in 1880), formerly of West Rutland, was killed in a railroad accident in Toledo, Ohio. Also, a former Rutland resident, Michael O'Neil, who became a policeman in Leadville, Colorado, was shot and killed in an attempt to quell a dispute in a saloon. A Rutlander named Patten was also killed in Leadville.

A Dr. Crowley committed suicide, taking 30 grams of morphine. (Like some other earlier Irish immigrants he seems to have been Anglicized and not a part of the Irish community.) Another suicide came out of the Irish community, however, when Edward Donner hanged himself after having been put out of Mrs. Kelley's boarding house because he had no money. A Mr. Dyer shot himself in a dramatic hunting accident, when, as his life ebbed away in the woods, he wrote his last goodbyes to his family. Dr. Hanrahan made the belated examination. But, despite his name, his was not identifiably Irish. Another violation, if not violence, resulted in a suit about a year later. Thomas Welch had to pay Mary Gavin \$300 in a County Court bastardy case, \$100 in costs and the rest in \$50 annual payments.

The continued and extensive coverage of Irish affairs indicates the local and national interest in these matters. The almost daily news items and the frequent and often lengthy editorials show both the concern of the **Herald and Globe's** editors and, presumably, the concern of its readers. With such a large Irish population in Rutland, even the older Americans would have an indirect interest.

As mentioned earlier, Parnell's movements are closely followed, from his arrival in New York on the **Scythia** with John Dillon on January 3 to his departure from that city on March 12 with a send-off by the 69th Regiment. His enthusiastic receptions in the New England Irish strongholds of Boston, Lowell, and Lawrence, are duly reported, as well as his address to the House of Representatives in Washington, which the **Herald** deplores for its political tone. Later, the Rutland Irish can follow his seeming triumphal tour from Baltimore, to Richmond, to Chicago, with eventually an address to the Kentucky legislature in Frankfort. Parnell's planned trip to California is cut short by impending British Parliamentary elections. After the Washington speech, wherein Parnell makes remarks about the Duchess of Marlborough's (a rival fund raiser) ancestry, and a small crowd in Richmond, the **Rutland Herald and Globe's** editors label Parnell's American trip a failure, claiming most Americans distrust, and are disgusted with, him.

Ostensibly, Parnell is lecturing in the United States to raise funds for famine relief, as well as to tell of the plight of Ireland. There are at least three fund-raising organizations, the conservative Dublin Mansion House fund, Parnell's group, and one set up by William Gordon Bennett's **New York Herald**. Parnell accuses Mansion House of not giving relief to tenants who have withheld their rents, and, conversely, Parnell is accused of discriminating against those who do. The **Rutland Herald** follows these squabbles over aid to the suffering. Drexel, Morgan and Co. pull out of Parnell's camp; Bennett's **Herald** fund, at first, cannot get Cardinal McCloskey or Parnell to serve on its distribution committee; and the Dutchess of Marlborough's fund indicates that nobody is really starving. The **Rutland Herald's** reports on state and local fund-raising fail to indicate which organizations were favored by Vermont Irish.

As the year progresses, and relief for famine sufferers multiplies, conversely, violence increases. The usual evictions accompanied the crop failures. To oppose this, the Land League intensifies its organizing efforts. The **Herald and Globe**, with Rome datelines, on several occasions report on the fear of the Roman Catholic hierarchy that the land agitation is "socialistic" and "communistic". Specific acts of assault, such as the assassination of a small landlord in Galway, Lord Montmorris (who had recently evicted tenants) and the "boycotting" of Captain Boycott in Mayo are detailed. The tone of the **Rutland Herald's** editorials is now that no legislation can really solve the Irishman's dilemma, for, under it all, what he wants is independence. The **Herald's** conclusion is that, for its own protection, England cannot be expected to give Ireland up.

Through the daily telegraphic dispatches in the paper, the Rutland Irish learn

of the growing strength of the Land League. Parnell calls for a withholding of rents in the coming year and threatens a boycott of all 4,000 landlords. In parts of Ireland, especially the West, Land League courts have more power than the official organs, even granting licenses at Fairs.

The establishment of National Land Leagues in Lowell, Brooklyn, and a Ladies' Land League formed by philanthropic women in New York City under the sponsorship of Parnell's sister, Fannie, are noted, as well as the fact that 39 such leagues have been set up throughout the United States. Michael Davitt, the founder of the Land Leagues, is in the United States. Parnell asks him to remain, collecting money. In November, Davitt returns to Ireland. In a speech in Cork, he says that he was well-received, but that the landlord's propaganda disseminated by United States papers must be counteracted. He also affirms that America is turned off by the violence. Davitt avows that the Land League does not approve of it.

The hostile reporting and anti-Land League posture of the *Herald and Globe* have little effect on the Irish in the Town of Rutland. The bombshell announcement comes on December 27 with the notice in *Local Notes* that, "There will be a meeting of the Irishmen of Rutland at the Village Hall, Tuesday evening, December 28th at 8 p.m. for the purpose of organizing a Land League. All Irishmen who sympathize with the present struggle of their countrymen in the "old land" are invited to attend. There will be persons present to address the meeting and explain the objects of the League."

On December 28 the *Herald and Globe* tries to get in a last word, quoting a London letter to the *New York Times* detailing burnings and shootings and other "outrages". However, in *Local Notes* it again announces the meeting for that evening. The Rutland branch of the League was formed, and, as recorded in the paper of the 29th, it was well-attended and elected the following officers: president, J. D. Hanrahan; vice presidents, J. P. Crowley, D. Kingsley, J. O'Dwyer; treasurer, P. Cain; financial secretary, E. C. Carrigan; recording secretary, J. P. Collins; executive committee, J. McGurk, M. Kingsley, D. McNamara, J. Caden, J. Flanagan, John Haly and J.P. Ryan. (In the issue of January 14, 1881, it is reported that the Rutland branch had 66 members, with more than 50 more in West Rutland.)

The *Herald and Globe* makes some reference to weddings and funerals. In February, James K. McDevitt and Miss Maggie Hanley are wed in St. Bridget's. Thomas Walsh and his bride return from their wedding trip. The length of Sheridan's funeral procession is commented on, but few Irish rate obituaries. At some weddings, such as that of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Gilligan, a list of presents is given. In one case, a correction was made, explaining that many more expensive gifts were presented than the paper indicated. The Irish apparently were generous. When the Reverend Charles O'Reilly reached his Silver Jubilee, over 400 children were at a presentation to give a gold-headed cane, a gold pen and a large gold cross. That evening the adults gave Father O'Reilly a well-filled purse. When the Sisters of the Convent of Our Lady of Vermont gave their Fair, it included a chorus called the "Shamrock" in which the children of the convent acted and sang. Valuable awards were also presented at the closing exercises of St. Peter's School. (Bishop DeGoesbriand attended.) K. Darby, M. Reilly, L. Sheridan, A. Keenan and N. Murphy received gold medals. A. Clifford was given a book. Although it appears that few, if any, Irish attend the local public high school, several young men are studying for the priesthood in Montreal. (But, W. Burns had to return home where he died of tuberculosis.) In fact, in 1880, there was a movement in West Rutland to establish a high school in that part of town. In 1881 it was set up.

It is generally recognized that drink was a problem of the Irish immigrant. In Rutland this held true. Those who are caught are publicized. While the fines for drinking are small enough, those for selling or "keeping" are not, usually \$35 — more than a month's pay for a workman. The method used was to jail the drinker in the House of Correction until he "disclosed" on the person supplying the liquor. Few would hold out. It turned the drinkers into informers against one another. A long list of names could be included here of both men and women who were fined and jailed for drinking and keeping, as almost all were Irish.



At times a warming drink would have been welcome to the emigrating Irishman or woman. Used to the damp but mild climate of Erin, the cold of a Vermont winter, where temperatures often reached 20 below, must have been a shock. The coldness of the earlier Americans would have intensified his clan-nishness. The Rutland days when the Irish were labeled "Finnegans", as they were in the 1860s, when they voted down tax increases at Town and Village meetings, seemed to be over. However, it was not until the March meeting of 1880 that L. W. Redington was able to get a resolution passed to bring the voters from West Rutland over in coaches rather than box cars.

At this time, the *Herald* does not show much religious bias, except to make disparaging remarks about the miracles at Lourdes and Knock — an 1879 claimed-apparition in Mayo. Yet, the Irishman, driven from his home by conditions engendered by his alien conqueror, looked upon himself more as an exile than other immigrants to the United States. For example, of 14 Rutlanders who applied for citizenship in 1880, two (Patrick McDonald, 61, and James Alwill, 28) had come over from Ireland in 1874. Two others (Patrick Glancy, 45, and Martin Kelly, 60) had come over as early as 1849. Three had arrived in 1873 and the others in the 1860s. In contrast to the Irish, when the Swedes came to Rutland, after 1882, they applied for citizenship within a year or two. The Irish were still close to their roots.

They supported the Irish programs. When Wendall Phillips, the renowned abolitionist orator, spoke on Daniel O'Connell for two hours, the hall was packed. When Neal Dow, the Maine prohibitionist, came to Rutland to speak, no one showed up, nor did Box Brown, the former slave who came in 1880, get much of an audience.

Even today Rutland is considered a litigious area. Contrary to common opinion, the Irishman rather than the Yankee is the progenitor of the practice. Patrick O'Heron and Dennis Kelliher got \$5 and \$75, respectively, from the Town for land damage in 1880. The jackpot was the \$1,076 that L. W. Redington got for Patrick Lynch in six suits. Likewise, the Kelly suit cost the Village \$156 and the Hurley suit \$125. In a settlement with Barney Winn over a sewer, he received \$696.30, and Josie M. Murphy, in damages and costs, won \$314.17. The rural rush to the lawyer is prevalent in Ireland today.

Perhaps it is fitting to close this history of the Irish in Rutland, Vermont, in 1880 with more information on Dr. John D. Hanrahan, both about other events of the year and some reference to his future achievements. He was an amazingly energetic man. As a physician in the days when doctors made house calls, and in a large town before the advent of the motor car, he must have spent long hours on the road, serving the widespread Irish community. In return for his devotion, they responded with intense loyalty in their civic life. In reading of the activities of the Rutland Irish, mainly through the eyes and ears of the local Yankee daily, their organization, closeness and interest in Irish and American affairs is striking. They have identity, dignity and power. They do not represent the majority in a Republican Vermont and never will, but, even though they will lose their identity, they will not lose their dignity and power. Much of this is due to the tireless ac-

tivity of John D. Hanrahan. An 1878 photograph in **Rutland in Retrospect** shows a slim and youthful man in a top hat posing in front of his home at the top of Gouger Hill with the splendidly uniformed fire company that he sponsored.

Dr. Hanrahan died in December of 1927 at the age of 83 from a fall down the stairs of his office on Center Street. Born in Rathkeale, County Limerick, on June 18, 1844, he reached New York City at the age of 11. He began his medical studies in 1860 and served as a surgeon in both the army and navy during the Civil War. Captured in 1863, he was held in the infamous Libbey Prison in Richmond. Soon after completing his medical studies, he came to Vermont in 1868. Married three times to American-born Irish women, he had four children, two sons, John and Hush (who became a doctor) and two daughters. All of his life he was a "staunch Irish nationalist."

His interest was in national Democratic politics, as well as the local. A delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1884, 1888 and 1892, where he served as chairman to the Vermont delegation, he was soon to be rewarded. With the victory of Cleveland in 1884, Dr. Hanrahan was appointed president of the United States Pension Examining Board. He continued as treasurer of the Board under President Harrison. During Cleveland's administration he also became the postmaster of Rutland. Prior to this time he had been a Village trustee for eight years, including two years as president of the Board. An inveterate joiner, his obituary lists membership in 19 organizations, medical, religious, fraternal and Irish.

To return to 1880, before he gained such national prominence, we see him under political and personal attack. In May a special Village Committee was set up after Hanrahan loses out as Village Trustee President. The Village books are turned over to an investigating committee. The accusation, apparently, is that trustees had special street work done in their own neighborhoods in order to gain votes. It seems to have blown over as the year goes on.

The harshest attacks come in August during the blitz for an Irish switch to the Republican Party. Besides the aforementioned blame that the *Herald* placed on him for allegedly fomenting a disturbance at the meeting, he was described as disconsolately sitting in his carriage, alone with his horse, outside the West Rutland Town Hall as his former followers meet, ready to repudiate his leadership. Later, when he became president of the Hancock and English Club, he is ridiculed as carrying a 10-cent flag in a torchlight procession. The defections are serious enough. Garfield won an extremely close election, and in the state legislature a Democrat is replaced by a Republican for the Town of Rutland, but Dr. Hanrahan is soon back as the leader of the local "Democracy".

Hero or villain, looking back over these long 100 years, he stands out as a man of tremendous vitality. And, as the Irish say: "You'll never see the likes of him again." God bless him!

Sources: **Rutland Herald and Globe**

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Deaths

Marriages

Town Reports

Village Reports

"The Biography of St. Bridget's Parish" — The Reverend Patrick T. Hannon.

Naturalization Records

Walton's **Vermont Register**

Meeting of the trustees of the Rutland Graded School District

Mechanics Liens

The Magnificent Scufflers

1880 U.S. Census

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE VESTIN FAMILY ON A VERMONT COMMUNITY

By Agda S. Westin*

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, large numbers of immigrants arrived in the United States from Europe, seeking new homes in this land of promise. For obvious reasons, different nationalities settled in groups. The Swedish immigrants were no exception. First, a few families would come to a town or city; then they would write to friends and relatives in Sweden, describing the merits of their place of abode. Often, passage money was enclosed for friends or family members. Soon a colony would be established.

In Vermont there grew up in those days several Swedish localities because of the marble and granite works. Sweden has many stone quarries, so, naturally, stone workers were glad to work in places like Proctor, Rutland, Barre and other towns harboring the marble and granite industries.

In 1892 my husband's father, Olaf Peterson, from Vestano, Varmland, arrived in Proctor, then a growing marble center. He came here on the advice of a friend who was the pastor of two local Swedish churches.

Father found that two Olaf Petersons had settled in Proctor ahead of him, so, when he applied for his first citizenship papers, he gave his name as Olaf P. Vestin, using his home town in Sweden as the basis for his new name.

As a qualified shoemaker in Sweden, father Vestin was a master at his trade. He worked in the marble mills only three months, when he felt he had learned sufficient English to manage work at his trade. He found a job in the best shoe store in nearby Rutland, six miles from Proctor, as a shoe repairman. In less than two years he was able to rent and furnish a modest apartment and send for his family in "the old country".

His wife, Maria, two sons, Severus, age 12, and Axel J., age 10, and little daughter Otelia, then only three years old, arrived in May of 1894.

The family had the usual experiences of greenhorns in a new country. The mastering of the English language brought about both humorous and embarrassing situations. For example, the older son received the nickname "Tunder", which lasted for years, because of his inability to cope with the TH sound in a reading drill. Yet, the excellent schooling received in the primary grades in Sweden enabled the two boys to catch up with, and even finish ahead of, many of their native-born contemporaries. All three children went to work after completing two years of secondary schooling and did exceptionally well at their chosen vocations. The children early began to spell their surname Westin, but Olaf never recognized the Anglicized version and stuck to the V even on his tombstone.

About the same time father Vestin and family migrated to this country, there was a great exodus of young people from Sweden who came to this vicinity looking for their fortunes and, in many cases, their mates. Most of the girls easily found positions as maids in the better homes in Rutland. The young men were welcomed by the Vermont Marble Company in Proctor and Rutland. Every store in the locality had to have at least one Swedish clerk to care for the Swedish clientele, as, naturally, the fresh immigrants could muster only a few words of broken English. Even the banks liked to have one Swedish teller. Employment was easy to find for those willing to work, and the ambitious soon prospered.

Almost before mother and father had settled their new home, some of these young homeless folk began to drift in on their free days. The Vestin home was always open to anyone. Sunday afternoon, when the maids were off duty, they would gather for a social time. There would be 10 to 15 for afternoon coffee and usually more for supper when the swains would drop in. Then the evening would be spent with music and games and visiting. This program was repeated on Thursday afternoon, which was another free time for the young maids. Always

*Mrs. Agda S. Westin, who lived at 7 Park Street in Proctor, died in 1975 at the age of 91.

there was a welcome and plenty of food. For supper there would be a huge pan of baked beans, rice pudding, platters of cold meat and the inevitable coffee and cake.

How the finances were managed is still a mystery to us, for we know the means were very limited, and little was furnished by the constant and numerous guests. Mother Vestin was a good dollar stretcher, and she helped earn a small contribution to the family funds by selling some of her homemade buns, bread and cakes.

For many years the family lived in an old house in the business section of the city close to the railroad station. Whenever a Swedish person from the nearby towns came to shop in the city, the trip was not complete without calling at the Vestin home and having a cup of coffee before taking the train home.

Often, when a greenhorn arrived from Sweden, he or she would be cared for by the Vestins until a home could be arranged and a job secured. I have met several people who came to this vicinity in the nineties. Almost always they tell about the Vestins and their help — a home, friendship and employment agency. This always meant setting up beds in the living room and, occasionally, even in the dining room. How it was managed no one knows except grandma.

Only last week an elderly friend started to reminisce about when she first came to Rutland. She had lived four years in Canada, where she had heard practically no Swedish since leaving her home in Sweden. She said, "I'll never forget my first visit to the Vestin home on a Sunday afternoon. There was father Vestin playing his guitar, Severus with a violin, someone at the old organ, and everyone singing Swedish hymns with gusto and enthusiasm. It was just like coming to a bit of Sweden." This friend was soon a regular visitor at the home and, according to my sister-in-law, one of the best beloved because she often brought some remembrance for a little girl or the family to show her appreciation.

Many a romance started in this home, and father would do his best to encourage it if the match had his approval. The young men would go to him for advice and counsel, which he gave with humor and wisdom. He could be depended on for a bit of financial assistance, too. Mother Vestin usually helped arrange for the wedding and the making of the new home. Later, she would be the one to help bring the babies into this world, care for the young mother and, in general, be the dependable helper in time of need.

By encouraging right living and giving of themselves and their home to these young people, the Vestins did much to steer them around some of the pitfalls they might have stumbled into if they had been on their own.

In the Swedish Mission Friend Church at Center Rutland, the Vestins soon became leaders. All the family had early developed musical ability. My husband remembers having to stand on a chair to play the bass violin in the church string band. Father Vestin organized a good choir; also preached the sermons whenever the regular ministers were absent. He had been active as a traveling preacher in Sweden while working as an itinerant cobbler. He was most genial and friendly, altogether a man of humility and sincerity, blessed with a wife who was like a mother to all. He belonged to the fundamentalist group in religious philosophy and was always zealously searching for the ultimate truth. In a private talk one evening I was truly surprised to have him admit his doubts about some of the doctrines of the fundamentalists, especially about immortal life. "But," said he, "whatever the facts, by preparing for heaven on earth, we make earth a bit more heavenly, and many who have lost dear ones are comforted by the hope of meeting them in heaven. Why take away anything that helps toward better living and greater peace of mind?"

As long as mother Vestin's health permitted, she nursed. If any Swede was ill, Mrs. Vestin had to come and care for the bedridden. She had the confidence of the doctors in the community. I was very ill when my first child was born. When mother Vestin arrived, I relaxed and felt "all's well with the world" now. A few hours after my little girl was born, I almost lost my life from internal hemorrhage, but she recognized the symptoms, sent for the doctor and began to do what she could. The doctor said she saved my life by prompt action. How many other lives she saved I cannot tell.

I first met the family in 1906, when I came to Proctor to visit an aunt. The older son was working in Proctor. It was at least liking at first sight, but I was rather

hesitant about spending the weekend at his home a few days after meeting him. My aunt made up my mind for me by saying, "It's all right to go to Vestin's" — and it was. I couldn't help but feel at home there.

I married the older son and lived in their home for three months. I never saw mother Vestin flustered or upset, no matter what the situation. Everyone was welcomed and served with coffee and buns as soon as wraps were removed. Mother's philosophy on entertaining unexpected guests was, "Don't prepare, just pull up another chair." The only time I ever saw her show any sort of resentment occurred one afternoon when she and I returned home to find the remains of a coffee party on the dining room table. She said, "It does seem as if they might have cleaned the table before leaving." It wasn't the fact that some girls had helped themselves to food and drink, but the unwashed dishes and general untidiness of the table which disturbed her. Absolute neatness was her law.

A few years after we were married, the Vestins moved to a home farther from the center of town where they led a more private life, though by no means devoid of callers and visitors. By 1910 the conditions for the Swedish friends had changed. Most of them had homes of their own, and fewer young Swedish immigrants were arriving. About this time, father Vestin was able to go into business for himself, setting up a shoe repair shop of his own, his pride and joy until he was 90.

Mother Vestin passed away in 1932 at the age of 76. Father Vestin remained active and hearty until 1943, when he passed away after a brief illness. Both received sincere expressions of appreciation and praise in their obituaries.

My husband and I have brought up eight children. They have all done well, and we are very proud of them. I believe their lives were deeply influenced by association with their Grandma and Grandpa Vestin. My children came within a short span of years, so it was a big help to me to send a few of them to grandma's every now and then. The children loved to go. At this, their other home, they experienced a calm, serene and generous way of life at home with so many children and too busy parents. At grandma's they had a better chance to express themselves, a freedom which was not taken advantage of because of their love for "the old folks".

Now that my husband and I are also the proud grandparents of eight lovely grandchildren, we have no higher ambition than to be as good grandparents to them as my husband's parents were to our children.

And as time goes on, if my daughters-in-law will feel towards me as I learned to feel toward mother Vestin, my cup will be full and running over, and, surely, goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCANDINAVIANS ON RUTLAND TOWN*

By Leonard A. Johnson

A thousand years ago, the greatest sailors in the world were the Norsemen. They made many daring trips into the open waters of the Atlantic. They discovered Iceland and Greenland in the year 1,000. The history of the Scandinavian people and their great influence on the development of America has been recorded in the books of history. As early as 1638, 50 emigrants were brought over by a Swedish Trading Company to settle first in Delaware called Port Christiana in honor of the Swedish queen, later changed to New Sweden. At this time, Sweden was a world power, having been an ally with Great Britain and the Netherlands in the Thirty Years' War.

The great influx of these rugged Norsemen in this area came in the 1850s. Living in the old world was difficult. The people desired a better way of life and hoped

*This article written by Leonard A. Johnson is a reprint from **The Rutland Town Bicentennial Sampler 1776-1976** and is reprinted with permission.

they could do so in the wonderful new lands of which they had heard. The common folks felt there was no future for their children in the old country.

Many of the Swedish emigrants came to this area in the 1870s and 1880s. Some went to Mineville, New York, and then drifted back to Proctor, West Rutland and Center Rutland.

My mother had two aunts and three uncles who came from Sweden in the 1880s. One of her relatives walked from Proctor to Concord, New Hampshire, and founded the Swenson's Granite Company, one of the largest granite companies in New Hampshire. Some stayed in the area, but others journeyed to other parts of America and established themselves in the business and professional world.

In 1901 an aunt of my mother's went back to Sweden. Her glowing account of America, the great land of opportunity, fascinated my mother and, encouraged by her aunt, she left Falkenburg, Sweden, in June of 1903 for Goteborg, where she took a ship across the North Sea to Hull, England, and over by land to Liverpool, where she boarded the Carpathia, which was returning from her maiden voyage from England to America. (It was the Carpathia that rescued 706 persons when the invincible Titanic sank on April 15, 1912.)

Landed at Ellis Island, her label indicated that she should take the train to Rutland, Vermont, and then to transfer to the Delaware and Hudson Railroad to West Rutland. There, someone would meet her. The young man whom her aunt sent out to meet her never made it. The kind engineer held the train, and he walked with my mother to Barnes Street, where he knew a Swedish family lived. Then she was brought to her aunt's home from there. Mother worked as a domestic for some of the socially prominent families in Rutland — Dr. Seaver, a retired Congregational minister, the Pond family and the Grimm family. She could recount many interesting stories of these families. In 1909 she married my Dad. She brought 10 children into this world. In the early years of their marriage, my Dad traveled all over the country for the Vermont Marble Company, and so mother assumed much of the responsibility in bringing up the family.

In 1967, my mother and I spent the summer in Sweden. After 65 years she returned to the land of her birth. And, as the great Swedish liner, the Gripsholm, sailed into the harbor at Goteborg, it was a beautiful sight to behold when mother met her sister and two brothers after being separated for 65 years. They recounted the departure of mother for America, the eldest of the children in the Swenson family. As she bade them goodbye hardly 17 years old and walked down



the road — only to be gone for five years to make her fortune and return to Sweden to make life easier for mother and father. She returned 65 years later, having lived a rich and beautiful life in her adopted land. Here she had given much to the community — over 50 years in P.T.A. work, a life member of the Center Rutland P.T.A. In times of sorrow, she was called on to console the bereaved. In happy occasions she was there to share this also. In the early years she was often called on to be with expectant mothers and ushered into the world little cherubs who could not wait for the busy doctor. Her home was a gathering place for the neighbors — the Polish, the Italians, the Hungarians, the Irish — who would share with her a cup of her Swedish coffee with Swedish delicacies which she had baked. To her Barrett Hill family she was known as “Gram”. Her door was always open to all — the very young, the middleaged and those who were in their twilight years of life. She was not a Swede but an American. She truly represented all ethnic groups who came to this fair land because they found a way of life which was rich and full and beautiful.

SCANDINAVIANS TO HOLD FAMILY FEST*

John Ness, President of New England District,
To Speak Saturday

Marble Valley lodge of the Scandinavian Fraternity of America will hold its annual “Family Fest” in the village hall and Odd Fellows hall Saturday evening. Marble Valley lodge of this benefit organization has grown in the last five years to be one of the most active in the New England district, which comprises about 55 lodges. It has the distinction of being one of the few lodges in America with two degree teams. One of these consists of the usual group of uniformed officers, who perform ritual work, and the other is a drill team composed entirely of women. The lodge has a seven-piece orchestra which furnishes music for all occasions.

Each year the lodge has what it calls a “Family Fest,” which is attended by members, their families and invited guests. The organization has grown so large that in order to accommodate the large attendance expected the committee in charge has found it necessary to make arrangements for the use of both the village and Odd Fellows Halls.

Program Arranged

The main program will be given in the village hall at 7:30, including selections by the orchestra, singing by a chorus of 20 voices under the direction of Albert Oberg, a monologue by Mrs. Emily Anderson of Rutland, and a one-act play, “The First Day of School,” with the following in the cast: Misses Amelia Bengston, Gerda Ball, Valborg Brolin, Ina Wener, Anna Bratt, Alice Peterson, Elsie Anderson, Signe Gustafson, Thrya Wener, Laura Anderson, Messrs. Oscar Lagerber, Herman Ball, Hilmer Johnson, Henry Peterson, Evert Anderson, Robert Johnson, Harry Williamson, Charles Larson, Mrs. Lily Billings and Mrs. Oscar Lagerberg.

The speakers of the evening will be Gunnar Nelson, president of Marble Valley lodge, and John Ness of Brockton, Mass., president of the New England district.

After the entertainment in the village hall, there will be refreshments in Odd Fellows hall, followed by dancing in the village hall.

Committee in Charge

The members of the committee in charge of the entertainment and dancing are Mrs. Linnea Anderson, Mrs. Emily Anderson, Mrs. Lillian Billings, Albert Oberg and Carl Anderson. The refreshment committee is composed of Mrs. Carl Erlandson, Albert Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Oscarson, Carl Johnson, Fletcher Lofquist and Robert Johnson. The musicians who play in the lodge orchestra are Joel Tillberg, piano; Carl Oscarson and Charles Larson, violins; Mrs. Linnea Anderson, saxophone; Fletcher Lofquist, clarinet; Elmer Dockler, drums; and Carl Anderson, drums.

**This article first appeared in the Rutland Herald and is reprinted with permission.*

THE ITALIAN STORY IN VERMONT*

By Mari Tomasi

The Italian story in Vermont is a young story. It began as recently as 77 years ago and thus post dates by many years the Irish, French, Scottish and Welsh stories. But it is not a short story. In its colorful background, its characters, its plot and counterplot, in the tears, laughter and joys of everyday living, in its flashbacks to Renaissance antecedents, in the impact of its Latin culture on a New England community and in its stark tragedy it has all the makings of an endless novel; — for it is certain that future chapters will be written and they will be filled with characters yet unborn.

Woven into the Italian-Vermont story are threads that had already been richly spun in the days of Michelangelo and the Roman Empire. It was the highly prized marble of the hills of Carrara, Italy, that provided the world with masterpieces of art created by the sculptors and carvers of antiquity; and it was the equally prized marble and granite of Vermont hills that centuries later attracted the descendants of these artists and craftsmen to Vermont.

Although Barre claims the largest Italian population of any Vermont city, it was to Proctor (or Sutherland Falls as it was then called) that the Italians came first — that is, by a few months.¹

In 1880 the Vermont Marble Company was doing business with the English firm of Walton, Goody and Cripps, then established in Carrara, Italy.² While in Italy at this time the late Senator Redfield Proctor, grandfather of Mortimer Proctor, former Governor of Vermont, was able through this English firm to persuade five sculptors and carvers from Carrara to come to Sutherland Falls to practice their art and to teach apprentices.

These pioneer immigrants arrived in Sutherland Falls in 1882.³ They were: Oreste Bertagna, Andrea Bertagna, Andrea Andrei, Giovanni Baldacci and Cialdino Fontana.

The entire Italian peninsula was already ringing with the tidings that in America there were unheard of opportunities. Yet prudently, despite the economic inadequacies of their homeland, these first immigrants to Vermont felt that their roots belonged in Italy and that after a few years of excellent wages they would return to their native land. For this reason, only Mr. Oreste Bertagna and Mr. Andrea Bertagna made plans, at that time, to have their families follow them to Sutherland Falls.

Mrs. Bertagna arrived in 1885, and on June 22, 1887 gave birth to Mary Bertagna, the first child of Italian parents from Carrara to be born in Vermont. (She is Mary Bertagna Luciani, 72, who now resides in Hyattsville, Maryland). Previously, in 1883, a cousin of Mr. Bertagna, a Mr. Victor Bertagna, had left Carrara to work for the Georgia Marble Company, at Nelson, Georgia. His wife, Marietta, soon joined him there and after a brief stay they both moved to Sutherland Falls. This Marietta Bertagna is believed to be the first woman from Carrara to come to Vermont.

Thirteen other sculptors and artisans from Carrara soon followed the five pioneer immigrants to Sutherland Falls. This group of eighteen referred to themselves as the "First Expedition." Among them were Ceccardo and Penelope Franzoni, parents of Almo Franzoni, and the brothers Giovanni and Andrea Calozzi who bore letters of introduction to Senator Proctor from the American consul, Mr. Bocacci, and also Andrea Catozzi, a fine musician, who led a band in Proctor for many years.

The following year a steady procession of Carrara marble workers settled in Sutherland Falls and among them were a few Italians from southern Italy. These found employment in the maintenance department of the railroad company. In 1894 the settlers established the Italian Aid Society which is still in existence to-

This article is an excerpt from an article which first appeared in **Vermont History, 28 (January 1960) 73-87 and is reprinted with permission. Mari Tomasi was born in Montpelier and was educated at Trinity and Wheaton colleges. She was the author of the novels **Deep Grow the Roots** and **Like Lesser Gods**.*

day with headquarters on West Street in Rutland. They also established a cooperative store for members of the Society, and here the women did their shopping, and visited with each other in their native tongue.

Before the women arrived in Sutherland Falls eight men of this "First Expedition" rented a house in the Powers Hill Section. Each man had a turn at doing the cooking for a week. It was soon learned that the artist in marble was not necessarily an artist in the kitchen. The story is told that when Ceccardo Franzoni had the "supper detail" he put a large pot of water on the stove, and in the boiling water he poured an entire case of macaroni — twenty-two pounds — to feed eight men!

In the 1890's many Italians who had been working for a few years in Westerly, Rhode Island, which was then the nation's leading monumental center, decided to settle in Proctor, Vermont. And shortly after 1894 a political revolt in Carrara resulted in a new immigration wave to the Proctor quarries and finishing sheds. Many of the descendants of these early settlers now reside in Rutland, West Rutland and Center Rutland. The majority of these second generation Italians did not follow the trade of their fathers. In Rutland many of them are college graduates. Some are doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, storekeepers, dry cleaners, restaurant owners, etc., and so help form the whole fabric of the community.⁴

In the veins of many of these children flows the blood of marble workers of the Renaissance period. It is reasonable to believe that if they had been born and reared in Carrara instead of in Vermont they, too, would have become workers in marble.

The newest Italian arrivals in Proctor included a talented young sculptor who came in 1955, and three carvers who came in 1957.⁵

* * *

Most of the Italians found it easy to become Vermonters. This is not surprising when one considers that the northern Italian hill-and-lake region which bred them was similar to the Vermont terrain. There was also the similarity in climate. And most important, the Vermonters and the Italians had one outstanding quality in common — a strong and persevering individualism. In Vermonters this grew, before statehood, from their constant struggles against the encroachments of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and New York, and it was revealed in their formation of an independent republic and in their state constitution which was the first to forbid all human slavery. In the Italian this individualism grew from the centuries of struggle against the invading French, Austrians and Germans and against warring neighbor states in their own peninsula. Italy did not become a united kingdom until 1860. Metternich, Austrian diplomat and ambassador, stated early in the nineteenth century that Italy was not a country but a mere geographical expression.⁶ Making for regional cleavage were the natural hill and stream boundaries of the Italian states. Also it must be remembered, that the States of the Church along the center of the peninsula tended to separate the north and the south. It was difficult, and still is, for a man from the northern Piedmont to understand the man from Sicily.

The man from Carrara thought of himself first as a Carrarese — that is, a native of Carrara, and then as an Italian. And southward, the man from Sicily thought of himself first as a Sicilian and secondly as an Italian.

Northern Italy, in continued contact with France, Austria and Switzerland, became highly industrialized and agricultural while the south remained passively peasant.

The Italians emigrating to Vermont and various parts of the United States differed from the Austrian, Irish, Russian and Hungarian immigrants to the extent that no dominant oppressive race drove them from their homeland. Emigration occurred chiefly through economic conditions and occasionally through political or social conditions, that is, the pressure of one class upon another.

Because of Italy's fast growing population both the Italian press and public sentiment favored emigration. The Italian government established an emigration office in Rome for the regulation and protection of emigrants.

Briefly, the Italians who came to Vermont fell into three categories: first, those in great majority, men from the granite and marble centers of northern Italy who came to work Vermont marble and granite; second, the southern Italians, and these were in the minority, who came to White River, Burlington, Montpelier, Barre, Rutland, etc., and who found their first employment with the railroad companies — (Many of these have since gone into many types of business for themselves); third, the northern Italian who had never worked granite but came from landowning or business families and who followed the first wave of granite and marble workers to Vermont partly for adventure and partly with the hope of establishing some business of his own in this land of opportunity.

The northern Italian differed in temperament, and usually in education as well as in physical appearance, from the southern Italian who came in great numbers to America's large cities and railroad centers. (My own mother, who was born in the northern Piedmont, was blond, with gray-blue eyes). A comparatively small number of Southerners settled in Vermont.

* * *

The Italian stories in Rutland and Barre have been stressed since it is in these centers that the greatest impact has been made. But the Italian story reaches into practically every community in the state. A large group of Italians once settled in Hardwick but many of them left for other granite centers when the local granite industry closed its doors in 1930. In Montpelier, Northfield and South Ryegate the Italian story was an echo, though faint and less colorful, of the Barre story.

The Italian story in Vermont has no ending. It has truly been written in stone — its beginnings in the stone which was quarried in the days of the Roman Empire, and its second chapter in the marble and granite of Vermont hills. Like the stone the story will endure time. Today vital chapters are being written by second and third generation Italians and by men and women of Italian background, for the percentage of marriage with other nationalities has been high. They are writing in a medium that is as enduring as stone for they are writing in the very bloodstream of the state — its government, its professions, its art, its business, its every trade and endeavor.

NOTES

¹Marble had been quarried and utilized in what is now Vermont and had already made its initial mark in Vermont history long before the arrival of the Italians in Sutherland Falls, Vermont. "The Quarry Swimming Pool (Dorset) . . . marks the site of the first commercial quarry in America, opened in 1758 by Isaac Underhill. In the primitive stage of the industry, when family burying grounds were common, stonecutters often started out in the spring with a wagon load of marble slabs, which they peddled from home to home, stopping off to do the required lettering for their customers." *Vermont, Guide to the Green Mountain State*, 79, (Houghton, Mifflin, 1937).

"The visitor to the old burying ground in Bennington may see today a small tablet of Vermont marble erected in 1759 to mark the last resting place of a Vermonter. This is believed to be the earliest known record of the use of marble for any purpose whatsoever As early as 1832 the General Assembly memorialized Congress with a petition for the passage of a law seeking to protect effectually our citizens engaged in the manufacture of marble from foreign competition . . ." and "In 1804, Eben W. Judd of Middlebury adopted a plan of the marble workers of the days of Pliny by sawing the first marble in Vermont with a smooth strip of soft iron, with the help of sand and water to relieve friction. This is the same plan now used universally for sawing marble all over this and other countries." Arthur F. Stone, *The Vermont of Today*, II, 532-533, (Lewis Historical Publication Co., N.Y. 1929).

²Wallace Fay, Proctor, Vermont, quoting from the records of the Vermont Marble Company.

³*Ibid.* Also, family notes of Mrs. Mary Luciani, 72, of Hyattsville, Maryland, whose father, Oreste Bertagna, was among the pioneer Italian immigrants to settle in Sutherland Falls, Vermont.

"In this narrative of the early days of the "First Expedition" and of the Italian immigrants who continued to come to Sutherland Falls through 1894 the writer has followed the account given by Mrs. Luciani, June, 1958.

⁵Wallace Fay, records of the Vermont Marble Company.

⁶Used by Prince Metternich in his *Memorandum to the Great Powers*, Aug. 1814; *Hoyt's New Cyclopaedia of Practical Quotations*, (Funk and Wagnalls, 1923).

THE ITALIANS*

Our Mother of Sorrows Parish 1907 - 1908

About the turn of the century, Italian people began to settle in the Rutland area. They worked in the marble industry, on the railroad or in the woods cutting and planting trees. They were paid \$1.25 a day, the prevailing wage for manual labor. A day's work was 10 hours.

In 1893, Father Gaffney, in his annual parish report, noted that there were seven Italian families in St. Peter's Parish. But this number grew. By 1906-1907 the Italian population of Rutland and vicinity was variously estimated at between 500 and 800. Some lived in Center Rutland, West Rutland, Proctor and Fair Haven.

These people were Catholics and had little, if any, knowledge of the English language. Some did join the existing parishes, but the majority never, or seldom, went to church.

In 1906, the Reverend Francis Crociata, an Italian priest, came to Danby to work among the Italians who lived there.

Father Crociata had been ordained on June 1, 1901, by Bishop Cajetan Quotrochi of Mazarien, Italy. He was a Sicilian. His first years were spent in pastoral work in the diocese of Mazarien, Italy. But about 1903 or 1904 he came to the United States and worked in New York State prior to coming to Vermont. He came here in 1906, and Bishop Michaud gave him the care of the Italian speaking Catholics in the Rutland area.¹

In the summer and fall of 1906 (from July), he was in Danby. The Baptismal Register of Holy Trinity Church, Danby, lists several baptisms performed by him. Among the priests who attended the funeral of Father Gaffney on September 14, 1906, there is listed "Rev. Frank Crociata of Danby, Vermont".²

But early in 1907, he came to Rutland and settled for a time, at least, on Cleveland Avenue, between State Street and Library Avenue.³

At this time there was an Italian Club situated on Evelyn Street just around the corner from West Street (in back of what is now the A&J Auto Parts Building at 176 West Street). One of Father Crociata's first stops was here to meet some of the Italians. He banded them together and rented a hall next door over the Rutland Star Lunch and began to say Mass for the Italians. This hall was used for three or four months. A move was then made to use the hall over the Italian Club for Sunday Mass. Tradition has it that he eventually lived in this hall and took his meals at different Italian families. These places of worship were what was called the Church of Our Mother of Sorrows.

The Rutland Directory 1907-1908 listed the church at 3 Evelyn Street (page 308) and his residence (Father Crociata's) on Cleveland Avenue (page 39), although his name was listed as Reverend Francis Crossway.

The Sunday Masses were at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

From this church he had a few weddings (Rutland Herald, February 26 & 27, 1908), funerals (Rutland Herald, February 14 & 15, 1908) and also baptisms.

In the fall of 1907, plans were made to build an Italian church in Rutland. On October 17, 1907, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington bought a parcel of land for \$200.00 from the estate of the late William H. Dunton. This land was situated on

*This article is an excerpt from the Reverend Patrick T. Hannon's typescript, "The History of St. Peter's Parish, Rutland, Vermont: The Rock" (1970).

the west side of Evergreen Avenue that extended from the Flory property on Columbian Avenue. It was behind the houses on Evergreen Avenue and extended back to the rear of the Watkins Avenue School. There were entrances to the property both on Evergreen Avenue and State Street.⁴

(In the 1950s Enos Courcelle, an Evergreen Avenue florist, bought this property from the diocese and later sold it to the New England Telephone Company.)

This lot is hilly, even today. Originally, it was a much steeper hill. Immediately after acquiring the lot, the Italian people, under the direction of Father Crociata, began to cut down the hill, dug a cellar hole, and laid the foundation for their new church (to get to the spot today, one must still climb the steep slope). "Eight men with teams of horses were put to work at this." There were evidently many large boulders which had to be rolled out of the way during the digging of the cellar.⁵

"Many of the 500 or more Italians in the city and the vicinity volunteered their services, and subscriptions are coming in rapidly. The structure, an ornament to the city, will cost \$15,000.00. The design, furnished by George Underwood after a church in Italy, will be drawn up by A. H. Smith of Rutland, an architect."⁶

"Each Italian will contribute the amount of a day's wage toward the construction costs."

During this time the Evelyn Street site of the Church of Our Mother of Sorrows was used for Mass, as well as funerals and weddings. Talking with Mr. Pasquale (Pat) Romano, he informed me that he was the first Altar Boy for Father Crociata. At that time Mr. Romano was eight or nine years old.

Mr. Romano claims that the attendance at Sunday Mass was small, at both Masses. This agrees with what will be mentioned later in these pages. Some Italians did come on the trolley cars from Fair Haven, West Rutland and Center Rutland.

From the beginning, this project had the approval, at least tacit, of the other Catholic pastors in Rutland. In fact, "The Rev. Norbert Proulx, pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish (now Immaculate Heart of Mary) even helped to select the land for the new Italian Church" (Father Proulx spoke Italian). And, after all, St. Stanislaus Parish in West Rutland for the Polish speaking Catholics there had only recently been established.⁷

But in December, 1907, the attitude of the Rutland pastors (Fathers Brown and Proulx) changed, much to the consternation and disappointment of the Italians, especially Father Crociata.

What brought about this change of attitude? From what is stated in the Heralds, the Italians were planning to raise funds for their church building by asking the parishioners of other parishes to contribute. Father Brown is reported to have said that, "They intend to make a house to house canvass among you" (the parishioners of St. Peter's).⁸

For years it was told that in Italy the church and its support came from the government of Italy. When the Italians came to the United States, not being familiar with the system of personal support that existed here, they would not give to the support of the church.

At this time Father Brown was having difficulty to balance his own accounts at St. Peter's, and Father Proulx had in the late 1890's finished building Sacred Heart of Mary church and probably did not have it paid for.⁹

On December 8, 1907, both Father Brown and Father Proulx spoke out at the Sunday Masses against their parishioners contributing to the new church.¹⁰

Speaking about the new church, these pastors said that, "The Italians were giving scarcely anything themselves and were depending upon the other Catholics of the city to build the church for them". The parishioners of St. Peter's and Sacred Heart parishes were told that, "They ought to do nothing for the new church until they were satisfied that they had done all that they should for their own church".

On Monday, December 9, 1907, Father Crociata and Vito Manfreda went to Burlington to see Bishop Michaud. But the bishop was indisposed that day. (He had been in poor health.) They had to talk to his representatives. On their return they said that the church would be built. They were given permission four months ago. The foundation was already laid, the land paid for and there was over \$400.00 in the treasury.¹¹

Bishop Michaud, through his representatives, had suggested to Father Crociata that he buy the old Catholic church on Meadow Street, and Father had rejected this proposition.

Bishop Michaud gave them permission to conduct a bazaar, providing they keep the rules and regulations governing the church in this matter.

During the same week Father Brown went to Burlington to see the bishop. Because of the controversy the bishop decided to give some guidelines in this matter in order to calm the contending parties. The letter, addressed to both the Rutland Herald and the Rutland Evening News, laid down these conditions. It was dated December 14, 1907. the bishop's letter was published in the two papers on December 17, 1907:

"All parishes have fixed and defined limits, whether by reason of territory or by reason of nationality of the people for whom a parish is established.

Each parish, whether the limits are territorial or national, is chiefly and primarily responsible for its own support and maintenance as well as for the outlay in erecting whatever buildings its needs may demand.

In localities where two or more parishes exist, whether their limits be territorial or national, the people may offer whatever help they are able and inclined to give, to any parish they please; this may be by way of donations, say for the benefit of a fair, in money's worth, or by attending such a fair and patronizing it as they see fit. But it is contrary to all custom for the rector of any parish to go, send, or procure the sending of agents, outside the limits of his own parish for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions for his parish work, while his own people are not asked to subscribe or even when asking his own people to ask also those of another parish to subscribe to and assist in the erection of his parochial buildings as though such buildings were their own.

—Permission to erect new buildings in a parish is obtained from, and plans for the same are approved by, the bishop in every case; and both must be in writing. The Bishop never grants this permission, or approves of plans, when conditions are such that a given parish cannot reasonably be supposed capable of meeting the projected building expenses.

Rev. Francis Crociata obtained our permission to secure a lot and to begin the foundation for a church; everything to be done and paid for by his people, with any help that others might wish to give them. The foundation being finished, nothing more was to be done until he received further orders from us. Plans have not yet been submitted; so neither plans nor cost has yet received our approbation or sanction. The Rev. rector of the Italian parish assured us that he could obtain from each member of his congregation a monthly subscription, and that this subscription together with the work his own people could give would be sufficient to cover the cost of erecting the new church.

In no case, does the diocese assume any responsibility without the express sanction and approbation of the bishop in writing."

From what has been written, there is no need to say that quite a controversy had arisen in Rutland over this matter. This is one reason why the bishop stepped in to try to bring some measure of calm.

In the Rutland Evening News we find the following: "Nothing was said about the Italian church project yesterday by any of the local Catholic pastors except Rev. J. M. Brown of St. Peter's. Father Brown stood by his guns and declared he had no reason to retract anything he said the previous Sunday. He emphatically denied that he was hostile to the Italian people or opposed to the building of the Italian church. He said however that he wished to prevent his people from being imposed upon, and that it was easy to infer from his remarks that he believed the Italians would never be able to complete the proposed expensive church.

"I told you last Sunday that we had reason to believe that the bishop had not given his sanction to the building of the expensive church the Italians have planned. This has been contradicted since, so in order that no one may accuse me of falsifying I wish to tell today that I have seen the bishop and he assures me that he has never approved the plans for the proposed church. I do not accuse anyone else

of falsifying, but I do not believe these people understand whether the plans have been approved or not.

"We are not hostile to the Italian people or indifferent to their spiritual welfare. I myself have taken the trouble to learn their language, so that I might hear their confessions and minister to them when they are dying. That, you will admit, is no easy task for a man of forty. But I am here to protect you from being imposed upon and I intend to do my duty. The Irish are a generous race and are apt to let their sympathies get the better of their judgement. The Italians are not putting their money into this project. They do not seem to have the confidence in it that some of you do."¹²

The newspaper does give us these enlightening facts. "It has been learned from other sources that the older Catholic congregations in Rutland accuse the Italians not only of being poor givers, but of being indifferent Catholics. It is charged that of the 800 or more Italians in Rutland only a very small number are ever seen in church.

"A count was made of the attendance at the church of Our Mother of Sorrows Sunday. There were 17 persons at one Mass and 25 at the other. — The question is asked how Father Crociata expects to build an expensive church with a congregation of that size.

"It has been said by those in a position to know that the building committee of the diocese of which the Rev. W. N. Lonergan of Rutland is a member, must approve the plans for the proposed Italian church before the actual work of construction is begun. It is understood that this committee will recommend to the bishop that the present quarters of the Italian congregation are ample for its needs; and that the building of the new church ought to be postponed until Father Crociata's building fund is considerably larger than it is today. Father Lonergan considers \$2,000.00 little enough to begin with."

The key to the problem of building the church was given by Father Brown: "I do not believe these people *understand* whether the plans have been approved or not." They did have permission from the bishop to buy the lot, dig the foundation, to hold a bazaar to raise funds. But the permission for the plans for the church and its cost had not been given. Since the Italians did not speak good English, this distinction somehow escaped them. Anyhow, the bishop's letter spelling out the conditions for building did calm the tempest stirred up by this affair, and the excitement subsided.

Except for letters to the Editor of the **Rutland Herald** on December 13, 1907 (page 2, column 4 & 5), and December 21, 1907 (page 4, column 3 & 4), nothing more appeared in its columns about the controversy.

The only other time that it was mentioned was at the end of February, 1908, when the Italians held a week's bazaar in Baxter Hall. In the February 25, 1908, issue of the **Herald**, there was an article describing the bazaar held on the previous evening. About 200 people attended. Koltanski's orchestra of five pieces furnished music for dancing. Other entertainment was also presented. Misses Underwood and A. Clifford assisted at the booths. Again the next evening a like number attended. But Thursday evening only 100 persons were present, with 30 couples dancing. From the accounts in the newspapers, there does not seem to have been too much enthusiasm generated.¹³

Thereafter, there seems to be no further mention of the construction or costs of the church of Our Mother of Sorrows, except for services held at the Evelyn Street church. These latter seem to have stopped completely sometime later (the last baptism performed by Father Crociata noted in the baptismal register was August 23, 1908). Father Crociata left Rutland, and from then on the Italian people came under the jurisdiction of St. Peter's Parish.

An item in the **Rutland Herald** of September 14, 1908, states that to settle a chattel mortgage held by F. A. Gonyea the interior of Our Mother of Sorrows Church on Evelyn Street has been dismantled and the furnishings removed. Altar fixtures and sacred vessels were removed by a priest of the city, acting under orders from the bishop.

This action does not mean that the church is closed permanently.

* * *

In the chapter on the Italian Parish — Our Mother of Sorrows — which had begun in 1907, we have outlined Father Brown's course of action when the Italians proposed to approach St. Peter's parishioners for contributions to build their new church. His kindness to the Italian people, especially after the failure of this attempt to build and the final end of the parish in 1908, is well known among the older Italians. When they approached Father Brown in the 1930's about a festival in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he not only went along with them but entered into the occasion. An Italian priest was obtained to preach a retreat or triduum for them, and, in the procession with the Statue of the Blessed Virgin through the streets, Father Brown took an active part.

* * *

¹Catholic Clergy of Vermont, Rev. J. Couture, S.S.E. and **Rutland Herald**, December 10, 1907.

²**Rutland Herald**, September 15, 1906.

³Rutland Directory, 1907-1908.

⁴**Rutland Herald**, July 1 and 9, 1907 and Rutland City Land Records Book 24, p. 36.

⁵**Rutland Herald**, October 22, 1907.

⁶Ibid.

⁷**Rutland Herald**, December 10, 1907.

⁸**Rutland Evening News**, December, 1907.

⁹Annual Parish Report, 1907.

¹⁰**Rutland Herald**, December 10, 1907.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²**Rutland Evening News**, December 17, 1907.

¹³**Rutland Herald**, February 25, 26, 27, 29 and March 2, 1908.

ASSUMPTION FESTIVAL HAS LONG TRADITION*

Though the Feast of the Assumption had long been celebrated with religious ceremonies in St. Peter's Church here, a group of parishioners in 1933 decided they wished to observe the holiday in the manner traditional in Italy.

Observed on Aug. 15, the Assumption is a Roman Catholic holy day of obligation. The day was set aside in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose triumph over death and her assumption into Heaven is an important part of Catholic dogma.

The parishioners appointed James S. Abatiell as their general chairman. The group was later to form the Assumption Day Feast Society, Inc., which now has a membership, including an auxiliary, of some 400 persons.

Among the first workers, according to Abatiell, were his father, Ralph Abatiell, Joseph Foti, the late Joseph Cotrupi, Pasquale Mazzariello, Pasquale Mondella, Ralph Esposito, Frank Altrui and Dominic Paul, father of the society's present president, Joseph R. Paul.

What they wanted, they explained to the late Rev. John Brown, pastor, was to observe the feast day in the manner of the old country. Father Brown expressed approval of the idea and gave the go-ahead signal.

Abatiell, society president for 18 consecutive years, clearly recalls the first early celebration. From the start the group concentrated on the religious observance. There was the procession bearing a statue of Our Lady through the streets, and of course the carnival.

This article first appeared in the August 15, 1957, issue of the **Rutland Daily Herald and is reprinted with permission.*

The latter event familiar to a generation of Rutlanders, was first held in the grass-covered park by the depot. It was small but its spirit was large. That first Aug. 15 there was a dance in a roped-off square by the park and later fireworks at St. Peter's Field.

The initial celebration, Abatiell recalls, met with such favor the society decided to continue the work, and move the carnival to St. Peter's Field, nearer the church.

Rutlanders will recall the days when the procession moved out of the church down Meadow St. and onto West St. Children carried flowers and elderly parishioners recited their beads as the file moved along Merchants Row. Periodically the march would be halted, salvos of aerial bombs set off and long strings of firecrackers exploded.

Through the business district would go the marchers, the statue of the Lady of the Assumption beaming down upon them. Parishioners would pin donations of money upon her silken blue cape or place bits of jewelry upon the float. The march would continue over River St. Bridge and back to the church.

After four years the procession route was limited to streets in the western section of the city, due to the age of some of the marchers.

"The processions were larger in those days," Abatiell recalled. "Marching with us customarily would be the Rutland City Band (now no longer a marching group) and of course the Mt. St. Joseph Academy Band.

"For several years we would have in the procession a total of four bands including an Italian group from Boston. Members of the clergy then, as now, were among the marchers," Abatiell said.

One of the first Society projects was the purchase of the statue of the Lady of the Assumption, symbolized standing on a cloud. The statue was installed on a church side altar where it remains today.

"Our group built a special float to carry the statue," Abatiell reported. It was hand-drawn and would be halted to allow the giving of donations or offerings to pay for a fireworks salvo. It was in this way the Society raised its money."

Funds gleaned, Abatiell said, were put into reserve for next year's carnival. One year they spent in expenses as much as \$7,000, the former chairman reported. The lowest figure was about \$1,800.

Unusual lighting effects were used in the early years. Colored strings of lights would be strung across the streets near the church and field. One year electrically-lighted arches illuminated Forest and Meadows Sts. and Convent Ave. In the center of the arches were silhouetted displays of the Blessed Virgin.

Another project, Abatiell said, was securing the services of an Italian priest, who would give a sermon in Italian at one Assumption Day Mass. The practice is in effect today.

The celebrations have continued each Aug. 15 since 1933, the former chairman reported. Abatiell is now an honorary president of the association.

Tuesday night, as in all past years, the statue was taken from the altar and placed on the aisle floor. About it the women draped a blue satin cape over white, adorned with gold fringe. The cape was a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Trombetta.

About the platform flowers were banked in profusion yesterday as parishioners dropped in periodically to recite their nine-day Novena which started last Thursday.

Masses sung throughout the morning will prelude the lifting of the statue onto its float for the start of today's procession at 2:30 p.m. This year's route will be over Meadow St. to West, School, Cherry, Franklin, Granger, Spruce, back onto Granger to South and then to Meadow St. and to the field near the playground, where the Virgin will be placed in a special chapel.

Since last year the carnival doings have been situated on the playground. The Society has an agreement with the Sisters of St. Joseph for the use of the lot.

At 6:30 p.m. High Mass will be celebrated at St. Peter's Church. The celebrant will be a member of the Xaverian Fathers, who will speak in Italian.

Saturday will conclude the carnival.

OUR ITALIAN HERITAGE*

By Bruno C. Baccei

This is a review of the Italian immigrants who came to the United States and settled in Proctor and Rutland.

As a result of Mr. Vaughan Boyce's efforts to establish interest in a Proctor Historical Society, this review was read at a meeting of the Society in May, 1976.

I have made a few changes and some additions. Possibly it will be the making of some Proctor history not covered by Mr. David Gale in the "Story of a Marble Town" published in 1922 and made possible by Mr. Mortimer R. Proctor, Sr.

Had we only realized it soon after Mr. Gale's book was written, we could have compiled a more comprehensive history of the ethnic groups that came to Proctor and made Proctor such a unique town.

Mr. Gale makes only casual mention of these ethnic groups that had so much to do with the life of the Vermont Marble Company and the Town of Proctor.

Employees' dates of employment are available starting in 1900, and research at a later date brings records back to 1890; also, a period around 1850 when other marble companies were in operation before the Vermont Marble Company was formed. Mr. Gale's book in 1922 refers to four Italians and one Swedish man as employees but no date of their arrival in Proctor. The Italians named were: Dante Baccoli, A. Fabianni (his daughter later married a Mr. A. Zambelli), Tony Parini and Frank Balducci. The first Swedish man was Lars John Larson. Previous to these two nationalities there were many English, Welsh, Scots and Irish employed.

Possibly fate entered into my part in this Italian historical review, as, soon after my retirement, my cousin Al Baccei and his wife were about to retire, and the thought came to my mind as to the number of years of service the Baccei family had with the Vermont Marble Company. This led me to ask Ina Baccei if she would look through the Vermont Marble Company records for this information. Out of a clear sky Mr. Vaughan Boyce called me to ask if I could come up with some information on the Italian immigrants that came to Proctor. This chain of events brought to my attention that the Baccei family, consisting of the parents and five children, was the largest Italian family to migrate to Proctor and settle in Proctor.

A short research did disclose that the Baccei family had accumulated over 400 years of employment with the Vermont Marble Company and over 600 years of Proctor residency.

My grandfather must have come to the United States around 1886, as the family has a picture of him with all the other workmen who built the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Building in 1888. My grandmother must have come to Proctor soon after, as Mrs. Lena Allard stated that her mother, Clemene, born in Italy in 1883, came to Proctor as a child. My father, Cesare, filed papers of intention to become a United States citizen in Massachusetts and stated that he arrived in the United States in 1891. Uncle Oldergio, Uncle Andrew and Aunt Clemene arrived with Grandmother Baccei in 1893.

I searched the Rutland Herald of 1897 for an obituary of my grandfather, but evidently at that time the Herald was not printing too much on vital statistics. I found the obituary of my Uncle Emilio who died in 1909. He came to Proctor at the age of 20 and had 22 years of service with the Vermont Marble Company. This would mean he came to Proctor in 1887. His obituary stated that he was one of the excellent sculptors working here.

Mr. Gale mentions two scrap books as reference, but upon examination I could

**This article is a typescript, "Our Italian Heritage", by Bruno C. Baccei. Mr. Baccei prepared it for a talk at a meeting of the Proctor Historical Society on May 6, 1976. Mr. Baccei's parents were from Italy and were married in Proctor, but he was born March 27, 1908, in New York City during years spent there while the Vermont Marble Company employees were on strike. He worked for the company from 1942-1962 and served as Proctor Town Clerk from 1962-1973. He now resides in Rutland.*

not find any reference to employees of earlier dates. Due to circumstances beyond my control, I could not contact all Italians or families still around Proctor, so I concentrated on families that I knew had grandparents who came to Proctor and which date would have to be around 1875 to 1890. Many of the Italians you know had parents or grandparents who came after 1890. The greatest influx was probably between 1900 and 1910.

One family I questioned, and many of you know this family, the Ambrosini brothers. Upon questioning Dino, Derno and T. Serse Ambrosini, it was disclosed that Tony Parini was their great uncle, and he came to this country in 1875, so presumably the other three came at the same time. They stated that Mr. Parini went to Barre from Proctor.

I believe that Dino and Derno Ambrosini were the last two sculptors who trained under the old time sculptors, and they retired a few years ago. Since then some new sculptors have arrived.

The Ambrosini brothers believe these four first Italians helped others seek their fortune in America. Most stories I heard were that Mr. Proctor arranged passages, paid their expenses, and they repaid him through their wages. It is said that Mr. Proctor contacted the American Consul in Italy, and he searched out the sculptors, carvers and marble cutters.

Some questioning disclosed that many Italians came over on their own and found marble and granite work in New York City and cities and towns in Massachusetts. In fact, our contacts mentioned marble shops around Boston, Lee, Quincy and Worcester, Massachusetts. We are about 12 years too late, as my uncle, O. Baccei of Center Rutland, died in 1964, and had we questioned him, he would have been able to give us quite a history of Italians, as he was very alert right up to the time of his death.

At this date there are a few of the elderly Italians alive but unable to remember of early settlers. My aunt, Mrs. Olderigio (Louise) Baccei (now over 90 years old), remembers coming to the United States but not the date. She remembers that her father died in Italy and left her mother with herself, her sister and a brother. Conditions were very bad at that time, and she thinks relatives, a Mr. & Mrs. Lattanzi, took her in or adopted her and later brought her to the United States. Her mother kept the sister and brother and married a Frenchman and moved to Paris. In later years they were able to make contact with the family but only for a few years, then no further word was received from them. Several Lattanzis came to Proctor. My grandmother was a Lattanzi, but she was married in Italy and had a family before coming to the United States.

Another elderly Italian, my aunt, Mrs. Andrew (Ione) Baccei (mother of Al, Renato, Dino, Lena and Clito Baccei), now over 90 years old, cannot recall any events. Also, Mrs. Alfeo (Julia) Fregosi (mother of Dr. Henry and Dr. Albert), over 90 years old, cannot recall any events (now deceased). Others not quite so old, and I have not been able to contact all, are: the family of Cesare Ratti, (Gino, Amerigo, Lydia, Blanche, Hugo); also, Mrs. Sirria Serri Frediani, Mrs. Esther Zambelli Azzari and Phil Rocchi. I have located some information from a short resume of the Cesare Ratti family that Gino Ratti wrote of.

Gino, Corrado, Amerigo, Aldo, Hugo, Elda, Lydia, Blanche were the children of Cesare Ratti, the well-known sculptor who carved the first six scenes of the Last Supper. The first one carved can be seen in St. Mary's Church in Whitehall, New York. After his death, later carvings of the Last Supper were carved by Attilio (Lando) Bardi. Mr. Ratti studied at the School of Sculptors in Carrara, Italy, and came to Proctor in 1888. He arrived in Castle Garden, the port of entry before Ellis Island, and his passage cost \$35.00.

In 1973 Gino Ratti wrote this family resume starting with his departure from Italy. Gino at three years of age and his brother Corrado, four years old, made the trip from Italy with their grandmother. Gino wrote that possibly there was keen competition of the steamship lines because when they left the boat they were able to keep the wool blankets that were supplied them on the boat, (possibly it was cheaper to buy new blankets rather than have the used ones cleaned). Mr. Ratti seems to have a wealth of memory, so possibly I may be able to do some more research. (upon correspondence with Gino three years after his family history was written, he was unable to give me any more details).

The oldest son of Mr. Ratti, Corrado by name, left school and went back to Italy to the Italian School of Sculptoring. He returned to the United States and was a sculptor in Proctor, Chicago and Washington. Another son, Amerigo, continued in the marble business and set up shop in Seattle.

The Vermont Marble Company helped many marble cutters to set up monument shops in various parts of the country. Gino also mentions that his father was very ingenious. As the Fourth of July was a glorious event in the life of us Americans, Mr. Ratti made fireworks, of which the so-called "Sky Rockets" were his best. On later research I found that Italians were very proficient in this field of pyrotechnics and that most fireworks factories had predominantly Italian employees.

By 1894 there were enough Italians living in the area that they began seeking social and benefit aids and formed the "Italian Aid Society Amongst Italians" with 50 charter members (similar organizations were in existence in Italy). I understand Buzzy Canapa had a picture of members taken at a building located where the home of Henry Barch stands. Henry Barch has the picture now, and we have hopes he will present it to the library. This was probably the first meeting house and later the Foresters Hall, now rebuilt as the Kallio house on the corner of Taylor Hill and School Street. (Later research disclosed that they rented houses or buildings from the Vermont Marble Company before the Foresters Hall was built.)

By 1915 many Italians had moved to Rutland and Center Rutland, so in 1915 a clubhouse at 415 West Street was completed on land donated by the Vermont Marble Company. The building and organization still exist.

At a meeting held April 20, 1917, the name was changed to "Italian Aid Society Amongst Italians of Massa-Carrara and Versilia". This then was primarily for the marble workers, as they came from this area of Italy and made Italians from other parts of Italy ineligible to belong.

In 1922 it changed its name back to the "Italian Aid Society Amongst Italians". The organization is now open to men who are descendants of an Italian mother or father or married to an Italian girl. Its real purpose was to supply a benefit to members during an illness or injury, as at that time no insurance was available.

Of unusual procedure, to avoid after-meeting arguments by members not attending meetings, they set a fine system; if you did not attend the annual meeting or a special called meeting without a valid excuse, you were fined \$2.00. Also, when pay was only \$1.00 to \$2.00 per day, a fine was assessed if you did not attend the funeral of a deceased member. When wages reached a higher standard, this was abolished. How were they sure of collecting the assessed fines — well they would take it out of your first sick benefit payment. In 1922 Proctor Italians decided to form a similar organization, so 50 men formed the Italian American Society. Practically the same by-laws were adopted and many continued affiliation in both organizations.

As I review this Italian heritage, I can see that Italians did not get to serve as community leaders except in a few instances. It was not that they were a "clique", but they seemed to want to enjoy more fun company and so did not mix too much. Another strange aspect of their life was in the learning of the English language — Swedish immigrants who came at the same time made special effort to learn English, but the Italians sort of held back. We probably did not contribute to the community in public life, but we did contribute a great deal in the artistic and cultural aspects. Many of the sons of these first sculptors and carvers learned the trade as apprentices and came to excel in their trade. Many of the Swedish men learned to master the trade of carving and stone cutting, and the Italians were very willing teachers.

In community life I found that Mr. Rocchi was the first Italian to hold public office. He was elected Justice of the Peace for the term 1902-1903. Also serving in public office in these early years were Amerigo Ratti, son of Cesare Ratti, serving as selectman in 1917, Grand Juror 1920-1921 and Justice of the Peace 1912 to 1920, and Corrado Ratti, Justice of the Peace 1910-1912. Later years found Italians taking more positions in public life.

In Town records I found that Mr. & Mrs. Rocchi were the first Italians to be married in Proctor, December 14, 1889, and next Mr. & Mrs. Charles Franzoni on October 24, 1891. By virtue of proof and substantiated by witnesses, Lillian Ber-

tagna in 1940 applied to the Rutland District Probate Court for a birth certificate. She was the first Italian girl born in Proctor, and the date was March 27, 1886. She was the daughter of Vittorio and Marie Ribolini. Others soon after were A. Franzoni, March 19, 1887, Archie Beratti, May 8, 1887, and Mary Bertagna, June 16, 1887. Mary Bertagna married A. Luciani.

Those few Italians whom I was able to interview made it clear that these first immigrants were of well-respected families because the area of the marble quarries of Italy and the Province of Carrara was settled by Italians interested in trade skills. It is a well-known fact that the first Italian immigrants who came to Proctor were well-trained in their field and that they were recognized as sculptors, craftsmen, carvers and stone cutters, as this was the type of workmen whom the Vermont Marble Company searched for to enter the field of inner marble artistic areas.

All of these so-called first generation Italians and the second generation did not confine talents and minds to marble only but entered into other professional fields. I know I will miss some of these who excelled in other areas after leaving high school and college. Names that are recognized in the marble field include Mr. Ratti, Mr. Pellestri, Mr. Serri, Mr. Bertagna, the Bardi brothers, the Baccei brothers, the Fregosi brothers and others, such as Franzoni, Boni, Catozzi, Beretta, Ghio, Passani, other Ratti families, Zambelli, Buggiani, Ravenna, Ambrosini, Lucarini, Tenerani, Marchetti, Ravellini, Panesi, Canapa, Solari, Gatti, Mutti, Ribolini, Parini, Fabiani, and many others.

There were also Dr. Serri, Dr. Bertagna, Dr. Azzari, Dr. Pisanelli, Dr. Henry Fregosi, Dr. Albert Fregosi, Dr. Lioni and Prof. Lucarini. Fidardo Serri became a well-known lawyer in New York, and it was reported that he was campaign manager for Teddy Roosevelt. Also, who can forget our first Italian school teacher, Miss Siria Serri? Our Gino Ratti, son of Cesare Ratti, whom I have mentioned, who, at the age of 24 years, became the principal of our neighboring high school in the Town of Pittsford? After further studies he received his Ph. D. and served as Dean of Butler College until his retirement.

The old North Street School was called the Pig Street School, so named because there were many tenements and residents on the street, and every family had at least one pig.

As for celebrations, we naturally observed Christmas on Christmas morning and Christmas day rather than Christmas Eve. A second Christmas was observed on the sixth of January, although not as festive and gift giving as December 25th. Easter, Thanksgiving and New Year's were also special.

I believe I mentioned Mr. Ratti and his fireworks, and the only other I know of was the so-called cannon that my uncles and father used as a noise maker on the 4th of July and New Year's Eve. This was a cylinder type iron form about 12 inches long and five inches in diameter, with a fuse hole at one end, a two inch bored hole in the center about six inches deep. This was loaded similar to the Revolutionary musket. As black powder was used in the quarry to blast the marble blocks loose, workmen would "borrow small amounts at a time" so that by the holidays enough powder was available to explode the cannons 10 or 12 times.

Much of this is not chronologically written, but some further facts were disclosed after the Historical Society meeting.

In Mr. Gale's History of Proctor, he makes just little mention of the marble strike in 1904 which involved many Italian workers. Union organizers from New York and Boston managed to form a union of some workers and convinced them to go on strike. Many of the workers left for New York, Boston, Quincy and Barre.

Also of mention, contrary to belief, we did not mash grapes for wine with bare feet. (They probably did in Italy because no one there could afford rubber boots, and possibly they were not available.) When it came time to mash grapes, a new pair of boots were purchased, or else the used pair from the previous year that had been washed and carefully wrapped was brought to use again. The fruit dealers of Rutland would come to Proctor and take orders for the boxes of grapes so that enough orders were taken to make two, three or four railroad box car shipments from California. Upon arrival of the grapes in Rutland, the dealers would deliver the grapes to Proctor by horse and wagon, and after the horse and buggy days they were delivered by trucks. It was also the custom in those days for

delivery of meats, groceries and other products. Farmers would bring their apples to sell and take orders for cider. It seemed that every family, Italian or otherwise, would have at least one barrel of cider delivered in the fall.

In Gino Ratti's history of his family, he stated that his father was instrumental in getting the "company store" to stock olive oil, tomato paste, macaroni and other Italian products. Later, Italian grocers in Rutland would come to Proctor, take orders and deliver the next day or the following day. One of these well-known grocers was Mr. Marro, whose sons, Charles, James and John, are well-known to the Italians. John continued in the Italian grocery business until his retirement in 1976.

In June, 1926, the Vermont Marble Company began an annual dinner in honor of employees having 25 years of service with the company. The first dinner was held June 1, 1926, and honored 381 employees having 25 years or more of service. This event still continues and then later included services for those having completed 50 years of service. By trying to detect nationalities by name, I found this nationality breakdown.

English, Welsh, Scots	102	Italians	25
Swedish	107	Polish, Hungarians,	
Irish	62	Finnish and others	25
French	60		

By 1933 there were 483 employees having served 25 years or more. Italians listed in 1926 were: Andrew Baccei, Cesare Baccei, Olderige Baccei, F. Barratta, Alexander Boni, Alex Cotozzi, Alexander Franzoni, Alfeo Fregosi, Adolphus Fregosi, Alfred Ghio, D. Giacomo. Luigi Ianni, A. Lando Bardi, T. Magliocco, Guiseppe Mayer, Gene Mayer, Augusto Passani, Aristide Pellestri, Andrea Ratti, Corrado Ratti, Cesare Ratti, Cornelia Zambelli and T. Zambelli.

Later, these Italians through the year 1933 had completed 25 years: Dante Bartalena, Aristide Buggiani, Frank Florio, Umberto Ravenna, Tamante Ambrosini, Petro Leo, Santo LeGage, Pilade Lucarini, Almo Tenerani, Duilo Torri, Ruggero Canapa, Bernard Ravenna, Enrico Solari, Louis Gatti, John Giancola, Tony Manganelli, Umberto Mutti, Angelo Navari, Peter Pellestri, Umberto Ravenna, Umberto Ribolini, Joe Solari, Guilio Zapponi, A. Carsini, Egisto Ratti and L. G. Marconi.

In 1955 thru 1959 the Vermont Marble Company had to call on 15 sculptors in Italy to come to Proctor for special sculptoring and carving work on the House of Representatives building. Mr. Francesco Tonelli and Mr. Renzo Palmerini are still with us. Mr. Carusi, one of the sculptors, remained in Proctor and passed away this past winter. Other of these sculptors returned to Italy, and others went to Barre, Vermont, to work for the granite companies.

The Vermont Marble Company made club rooms available to these new arrivals to maintain a social contact for them. This group of new arrivals were made part of the social membership of the Italian American Society. The clubroom was located in what was the North Street Barber Shop, located near the North Street railroad overpass, and is now part of the Visi house. (Located across from the big rock at the top of so-called Powers Hill).

Other sculptors who came from Italy were M. Gemigniani, G. Tonelli, Telara, Genovesi, Ribolini, Zeni, Musetti, Polinia, Lazzari, Donati Ceccinelli and Marchini. The clubroom was discontinued in 1965.

It is said that the Italian immigrants arrived with the conviction that we have no education so must guide ourselves with our hands. They should have said: we must become educated also.

As late as 1960, and probably to date, Italian continues to be the most commonly spoken foreign language in the United States.

It was said that during the depression of the 1930's the Italians had the lowest percentage of persons applying for relief. The families helped each other, even by moving in with each other and making ends meet rather than seek local town or city relief. The 1970 Census reports that only 1.7 per cent of Italian males in the labor pool were unemployed, and .8 per cent of whole Italian families with dependent children had unemployed fathers.

I hope to continue with more facts so would appreciate any other information on the Italian immigration to Proctor.

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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The Rutland Historical Society was founded in 1969 to preserve, study and disseminate the history of the original Town of Rutland as chartered by New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth in 1761, now comprised of the City of Rutland (1892) and the Towns of Rutland (1761), Proctor (1886) and West Rutland (1886). The Society maintains and operates The Rutland Museum in the historic Bank of Rutland building built in 1825, now owned by the City of Rutland, and The Vermont Farm and Rural Life Museum at the Vermont State Fair. A research library and the historical collections are maintained in the Museums and the historic Nickwackett Fire Station. Gifts or bequests of articles of historical interest or money are welcome at all times and are deductible for income tax purposes.

The Society publishes the Rutland Historical Society Quarterly for the members and presents public historical programs throughout the year at the Rutland Free Library in the Nella Grimm Fox Room. The Annual Meeting of the Society is held on the third Wednesday of October.

Membership in the Society is open to all upon payment of dues to the Treasurer, Sanborn Partridge, 62 Ormsbee Avenue, Proctor, Vermont 05765. Membership entitles each member to a subscription to four issues each year of the Quarterly, a copy of the Annual Report, the right to vote at business meetings and the benefits of supporting the Museums, monthly programs, library and collections. Dues are \$3.00 a year for regular members and \$5.00 for a family membership; for those wishing to give the Society further support a contributing membership is \$10.00; a sponsor membership is \$25.00; a sustaining membership is \$100.00 (minimum); and a life membership (one payment only) is \$100.00. Members wishing to pay two or more years' dues in advance are encouraged to do so to reduce costs. The expiration date of each membership is listed on the mailing label of the publication. Please send change of address on Postal Service Form 3576 (a postcard available free of charge at your local post office).

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